ENG 1101
ESSAY #1**:** Narrative and Descriptive Essay
THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT YOUR TRANSITION INTO COLLEGE

DUE: At the end of class, Monday, Sept. 18
Handwritten in class, about 2 ½-3 pages
The planning sheet should be turned in with your essay and will count toward your essay grade.

Essay 1: Preparation
In class, we discussed five resources that describe the challenge of transitioning into a first year at college. These essays also explore habits that can lead to college success, build self-confidence, and/or develop character. These essays are:

- "Q&A: First Generation Students" from *The New York Times*, multiple authors
- "Why College Freshmen Need to Take Emotions 101" by Diana Divecha and Robin Stern
- "One Student's Story: A Climb Out of Depression, Doubt, and Academic Failure" by Alina Tugend
- "Preparing Emerging Adults for College and Beyond" by Alina Tugend
- "Colleges Get Proactive in Addressing Depression on Campus" by Alina Tugend

You have already been assigned (and completed) a summary drawn from: "Q&A: First Generation Students."

ESSAY 1: ASSIGNMENT
For this essay, you will respond to **one** of the following prompts and integrate **three** of the above texts to support your argument. You will receive a planning sheet to complete before class. Turn this in with your essay.

Prompt Option 1:
The article "Why College Freshmen Need to Take Emotions 101" explores the rising number of students dealing with anxiety and depression during their first year of college. The writers Divecha and Stern offer their definition of "emotional intelligence" as "the ability to reason with and about emotions to achieve goals." The authors also suggest that developing emotional intelligence is more important than developing self-esteem when it comes to reducing young people's temptations to engage in self-harming behaviors. **Write an essay that argues for developing the one aspect of emotional intelligence that you think is most relevant to making the transition into a first year at college.**

If you choose this option, your essay must include the following:

- A thesis statement in the introductory paragraph that identifies one aspect of emotional intelligence you believe students new to college can and should cultivate. (Sample thesis: I argue that first year students must develop a sense of resilience to endure the stresses that may arise. [What is also implied: This essay will describe what I mean by resilience and provide reasons why resiliance is the most important trait for freshmen to develop.])
- One paragraph that *describes and defines* this aspect of "emotional intelligence" in your own words. Do not plagiarize Divecha and Stern's definition. This paragraph using the descriptive or definitive mode *might* be your first body paragraph.
- One paragraph that provides a brief *narrative* example from your own educational experience or the experience of someone you know that shows demonstration of this aspect of emotional intelligence or a time when this skill proved to be needed. This paragraph using the narrative mode might be your second body paragraph.

In addition to Divecha and Stern's "Why College Freshmen Need to Take Emotions 101", Option 1 must contain references to two other sources in your body paragraphs:

- "Q&A: First Generation Students." Reference the section you previously summarized or a different section.
- "Preparing Emerging Adults for College and Beyond." Choose one specific suggestion from the listed tasks.
- Note: Do not use sources other than the three sources identified here.

Prompt Option 2:
Alina Tugend's essay, "Colleges Get Proactive in Addressing Depression on Campus," explores how several campuses are dealing with the challenge of meeting the emotional needs of students on campus and rising rates of depression and anxiety. This essay also argues that contemporary college freshmen now are coming from more diverse backgrounds, have older parents and/or are living at home, and have more anxiety about their economic situations and the future job

market, all factors that might contribute to intensified first-year anxiety. **Write an essay that argues one specific way you think City Tech might help first year students more effectively deal with anxiety and depression**.
If you choose this option, your essay must include the following:

- A thesis statement in the introductory paragraph that argues for one method colleges might try to help first year students struggling with anxiety and depression. (Sample thesis: To help new students deal with anxiety or other emotional difficulties during their first year of college, I believe City Tech should increase social activities over the weekend to help students develop a sense of college community. [What is also implied: This essay will describe what I mean by "weekend social activities" and provide reasons why more social activities could help students who are dealing with anxiety and depression.]
- One paragraph that *describes and defines* the option. You might think about how resources within and outside of the college environment can be used. Use Tugend's essay to enhance this definition paragraph. This paragraph using the descriptive or definitive mode *might* be your first body paragraph.
- In another paragraph, provide a brief *narrative* example from your own educational experience or the experience of someone you know that shows why or how this particular solution might help you or the person you know. This paragraph using the narrative mode might be your second body paragraph.

- In addition to Tugend's "Colleges Get Proactive in Addressing Depression on Campus, Option 2 must contain references to two other sources in your body paragraphs:
  - "Q&A: First Generation Students." Reference the section you previously summarized or a different section.
  - "Preparing Emerging Adults for College and Beyond." Choose one specific suggestion from the listed tasks.
  - Note: Do not use sources other than the three sources identified here.

RHETORICAL CONCEPTS:
NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE MODES

Remember strategies specific to incorporating the **narrative mode**:

- Main point: what was learned in the experience you are referencing in your essay?
- Setting: clarify place and time. For example, are you relaying an event that took place in Manhattan or Queens? Are you describing something that happened in 2006? 2016?
- Conflict: what was at stake for you in this situation?
- Sequence of events. Though you are writing about personal experience for only one paragraph in this assignment, consider whether the event conveyed has a beginning, middle, and end. Tell the story chronologically if possible.
- Character: who is involved in this conflict other than you?
- Resolution: how was the situation "solved"?
- ***Transitions/connecting words*** appropriate to narrative technique include references to time, such as: afterward, currently, eventually, finally, first, later, meanwhile, next, now, soon, and then.
- Here is a link to Purdue OWL that gives tips on the narrative mode: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/04/

Remember strategies specific to the **descriptive and definition mode**:

- Use the five senses: seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. In writing, visual details are especially powerful.
- Be specific to provide clarity.
- When writing of abstract ideas, which is frequent in academic writing, description goes beyond the physical senses. You might turn to definitions and/or synonyms that offer clarity. (But ONLY use words you feel confident using.) For the response to Cox's essay, consider synonyms and definitions for courage. Describe specific crises or people. For the response to Goleman's essay, consider synonyms and definitions for an expert or high achiever.
- ***Transitions/connecting words*** appropriate to descriptive technique include references to placement, such as: next to, near, close, between, above, toward, away, left, right, center, front, back, and middle. (There are obviously many of these words. Use precision!)
- Here is a link to Purdue OWL that gives tips on the definition and descriptive technique:
- https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/03/.